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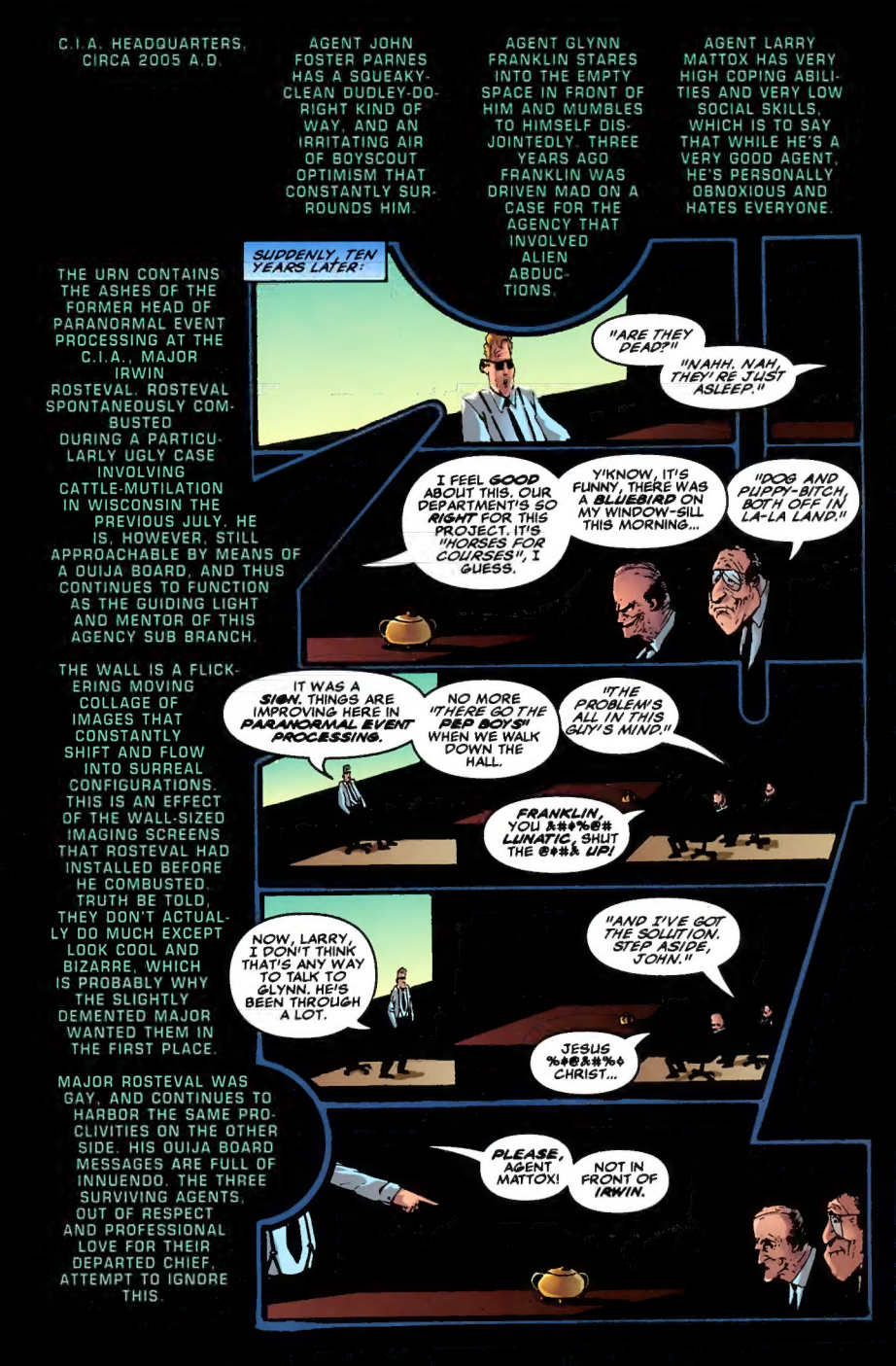
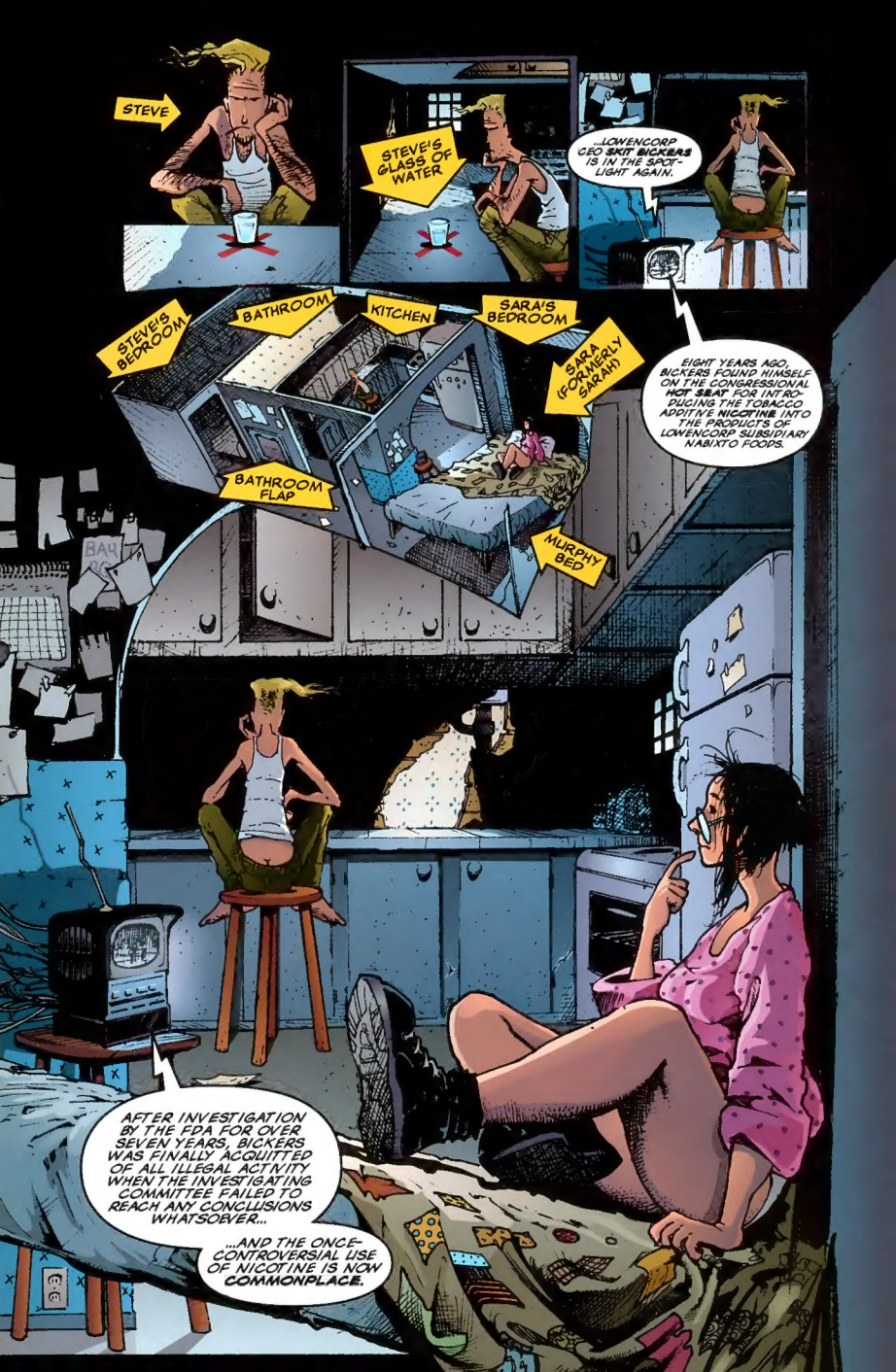
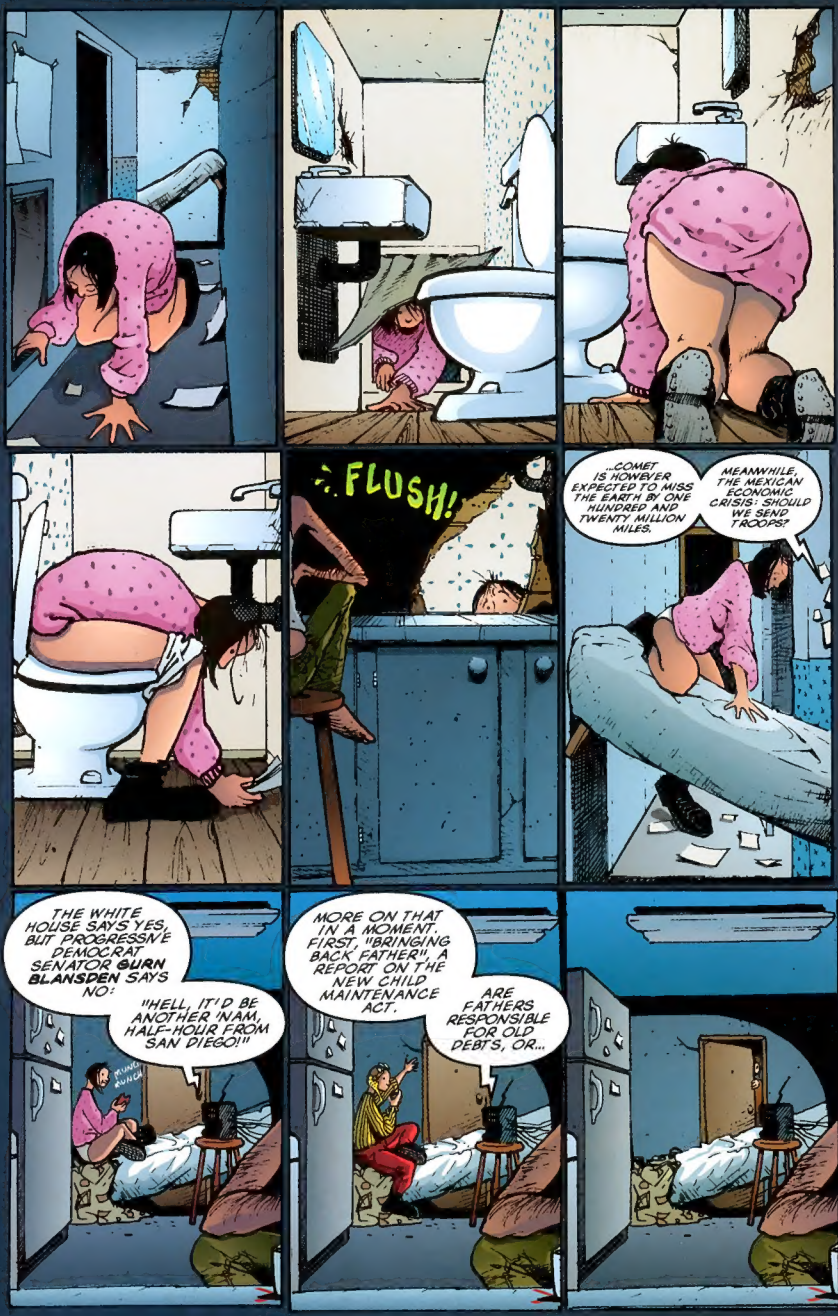
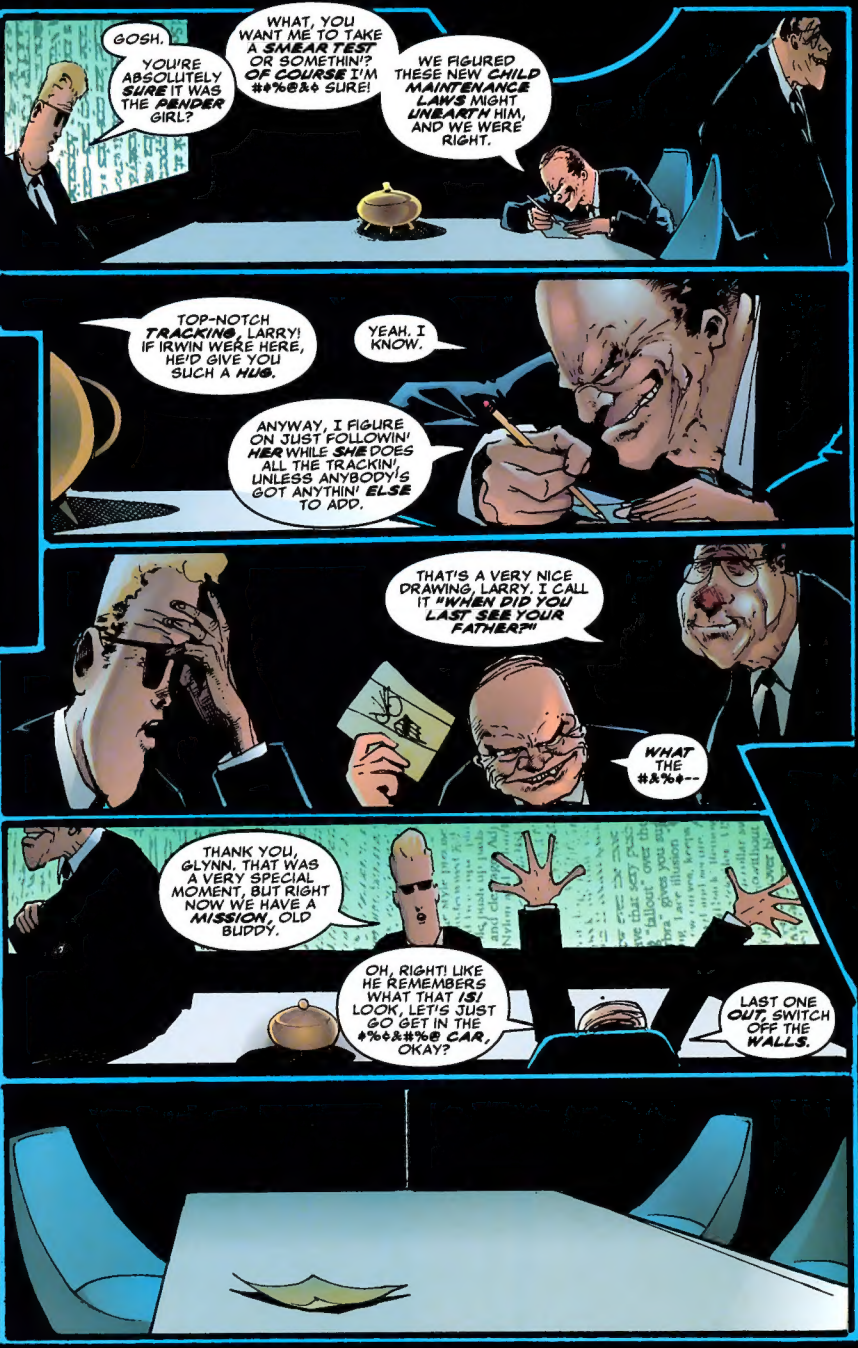

C.I.A. HEADQUARTERS, CIRCA 2005 A.D.
AGENT JOHN FOSTER PARNES HAS A SQUEAKY-CLEAN DUDLEY-DO-RIGHT KIND OF WAY, AND AN IRRITATING AIR OF BOYSCOUT OPTIMISM THAT CONSTANTLY SURROUNDS HIM.
AGENT GLYNN FRANKLIN STARES INTO THE EMPTY SPACE IN FRONT OF HIM AND MUMBLES TO HIMSELF DISJOINTEDLY. THREE YEARS AGO FRANKLIN WAS DRIVEN MAD ON A CASE FOR THE AGENCY THAT INVOLVED ALIEN ABDUCTIONS.
AGENT LARRY MATTOX HAS VERY HIGH COPING ABILITIES AND VERY LOW SOCIAL SKILLS, WHICH IS TO SAY THAT WHILE HE'S A VERY GOOD AGENT, HE'S PERSONALLY OBNOXIOUS AND HATES EVERYONE.
THE URN CONTAINS THE ASHES OF THE FORMER HEAD OF PARANORMAL EVENT PROCESSING AT THE C.I.A., MAJOR IRWIN ROSTEVAL. ROSTEVAL SPONTANEOUSLY COMBUSTED DURING A PARTICULARLY UGLY CASE INVOLVING CATTLE-MUTILATION IN WISCONSIN THE PREVIOUS JULY. HE IS, HOWEVER, STILL APPROACHABLE BY MEANS OF A OUIJA BOARD, AND THUS CONTINUES TO FUNCTION AS THE GUIDING LIGHT AND MENTOR OF THIS AGENCY SUB BRANCH.
THE WALL IS A FLICKERING MOVING COLLAGE OF IMAGES THAT CONSTANTLY SHIFT AND FLOW INTO SURREAL CONFIGURATIONS. THIS IS AN EFFECT OF THE WALL-SIZED IMAGING SCREENS THAT ROSTEVAL HAD INSTALLED BEFORE HE COMBUSTED. TRUTH BE TOLD, THEY DON'T ACTUALLY DO MUCH EXCEPT LOOK COOL AND BIZARRE, WHICH IS PROBABLY WHY THE SLIGHTLY DEMENTED MAJOR WANTED THEM IN THE FIRST PLACE.
MAJOR ROSTEVAL WAS GAY, AND CONTINUES TO HARBOR THE SAME PROCLIVITIES ON THE OTHER SIDE. HIS OUIJA BOARD MESSAGES ARE FULL OF INNUENDO. THE THREE SURVIVING AGENTS, OUT OF RESPECT AND PROFESSIONAL LOVE FOR THEIR DEPARTED CHIEF, ATTEMPT TO IGNORE THIS.
SUDDENLY, TEN YEARS LATER:
"ARE THEY DEAD?"
"NAHH. NAH, THEY'RE JUST ASLEEP."
I FEEL GOOD ABOUT THIS. OUR DEPARTMENT'S SO RIGHT FOR THIS PROJECT. IT'S "HORSES FOR COURSES", I GUESS.
Y'KNOW, IT'S FUNNY, THERE WAS A BLUEBIRD ON MY WINDOW-SILL THIS MORNING...
"DOG AND PUPPY-BITCH, BOTH OFF IN LA-LA LAND."
IT WAS A SIGN. THINGS ARE IMPROVING HERE IN PARANORMAL EVENT PROCESSING.
NO MORE "IT'HERE GO THE PEP BOYS!" WHEN WE WALK DOWN THE HALL.
"IT'HE PROBLEM'S ALL IN THIS GUY'S MIND."
FRANKLIN, YOU &##%@# LUNATIC, SHUT THE @##& UP!
NOW, LARRY, I DON'T THINK THAT'S ANY WAY TO TALK TO GLYNN. HE'S BEEN THROUGH A LOT.
"AND I'VE GOT THE SOLUTION. STEP ASIDE, JOHN."
JESUS %#@&#%# CHRIST...
PLEASE, AGENT MATTOX!
NOT IN FRONT OF IRWIN.


STEVE
STEVE'S GLASS OF WATER
...LOWENCORP CEO SKIT BICKERS IS IN THE SPOTLIGHT AGAIN.
EIGHT YEARS AGO, BICKERS FOUND HIMSELF ON THE CONGRESSIONAL "HOT SEAT" FOR INTRODUCING THE TOBACCO ADDITIVE NICOTINE INTO THE PRODUCTS OF LOWENCORP SUBSIDIARY NABIXTO FOODS.
STEVE'S BEDROOM
BATHROOM
KITCHEN
SARA'S BEDROOM
SARA (FORMERLY SARAH)
BATHROOM FLAP
MURPHY BED
AFTER INVESTIGATION BY THE FDA FOR OVER SEVEN YEARS, BICKERS WAS FINALLY ACQUITTED OF ALL ILLEGAL ACTIVITY WHEN THE INVESTIGATING COMMITTEE FAILED TO REACH ANY CONCLUSIONS WHATSOEVER...
...AND THE ONCE-CONTROVERSIAL USE OF NICOTINE IS NOW COMMONPLACE.


FLUSH!
...COMET IS HOWEVER EXPECTED TO MISS THE EARTH BY ONE HUNDRED AND TWENTY MILLION MILES.
MEANWHILE, THE MEXICAN ECONOMIC CRISIS: SHOULD WE SEND TROOPS?
THE WHITE HOUSE SAYS YES, BUT PROGRESSIVE DEMOCRAT SENATOR BURN BLANSDEN SAYS NO:
"HELL, IT'D BE ANOTHER 'NAM, HALF-HOUR FROM SAN DIEGO!"
MORE ON THAT IN A MOMENT. FIRST, "BRINGING BACK FATHER", A REPORT ON THE NEW CHILD MAINTENANCE ACT.
ARE FATHERS RESPONSIBLE FOR OLD DEBTS, OR...

SARA!
HEY, SARA!
SARA, WE HAVE TO TALK...
NORBERT, I DON'T KNOW YOU. GO NAG SOMEBODY ELSE.
WELFAR
OFFICE

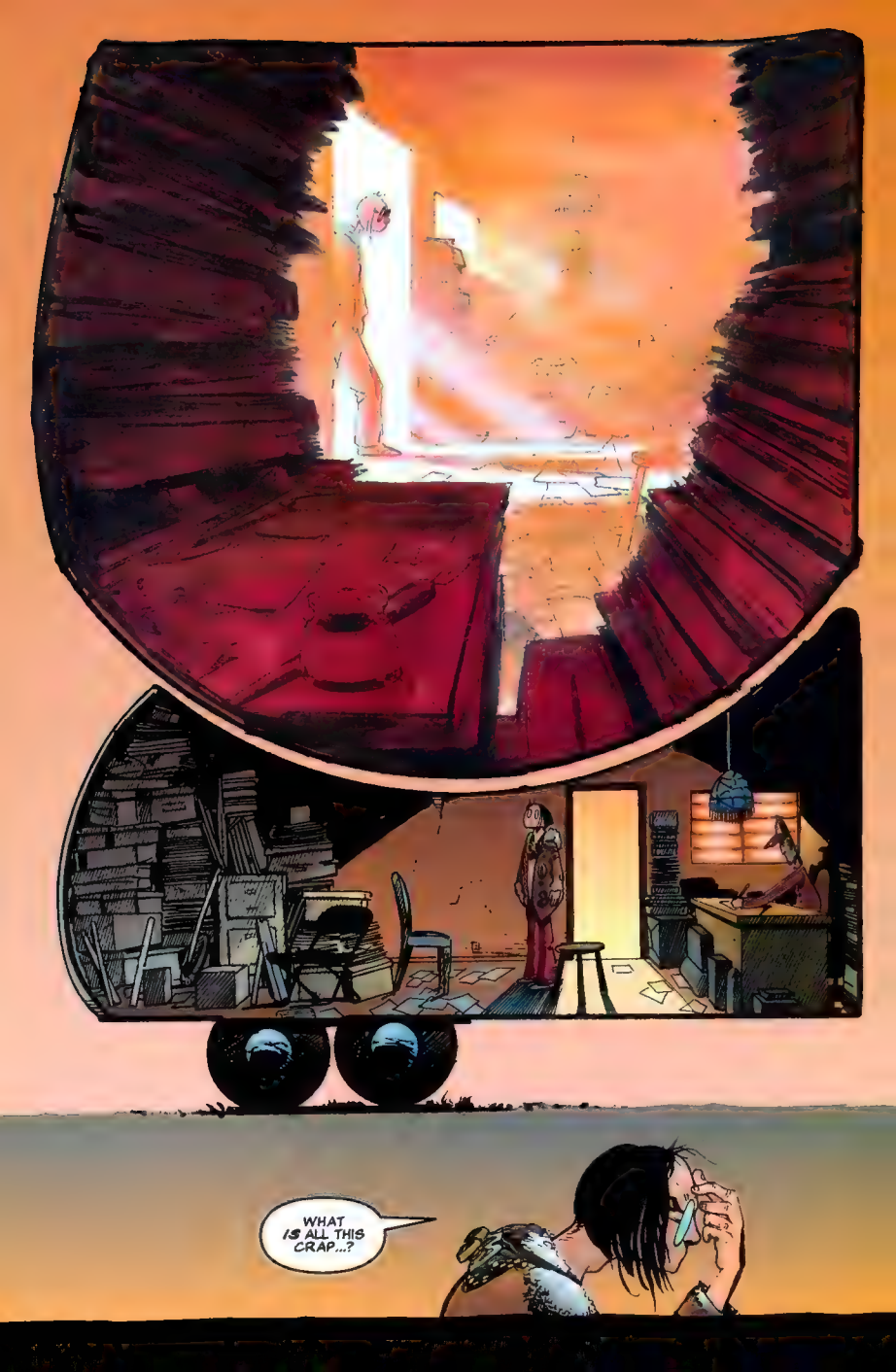
LOOK, I JUST WANT MY CHECK, OKAY?
THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE. THE NEW CHILD MAINTENANCE ACT MAKES YOUR FATHER RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR UPKEEP, RATHER THAN THE STATE.
ARE YOU KIDDING? I'M TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OLD!
MAYBE SO, BUT THE LAW'S RETROACTIVE. FOR SEVERAL YEARS YOUR FATHER WAS RESPONSIBLE BUT LET THE STATE SUPPORT YOU. IT'S LIKE BACK TAXES.
WAIT A MINUTE--ME, GET MONEY OFF MY FATHER? ME AND MOM DIDN'T EVEN WANT CONTACT WITH MY FATHER...
THAT'S TOO BAD, HONEY, BECAUSE HE'S WHERE YOU GET YOUR HANDOUTS FROM NOW ON.
NEXT, PLEASE.
I DON'T #@&%$¢ BELIEVE THIS!
I NEED EIGHT DOLLARS FOR A QUART OF FOOD.

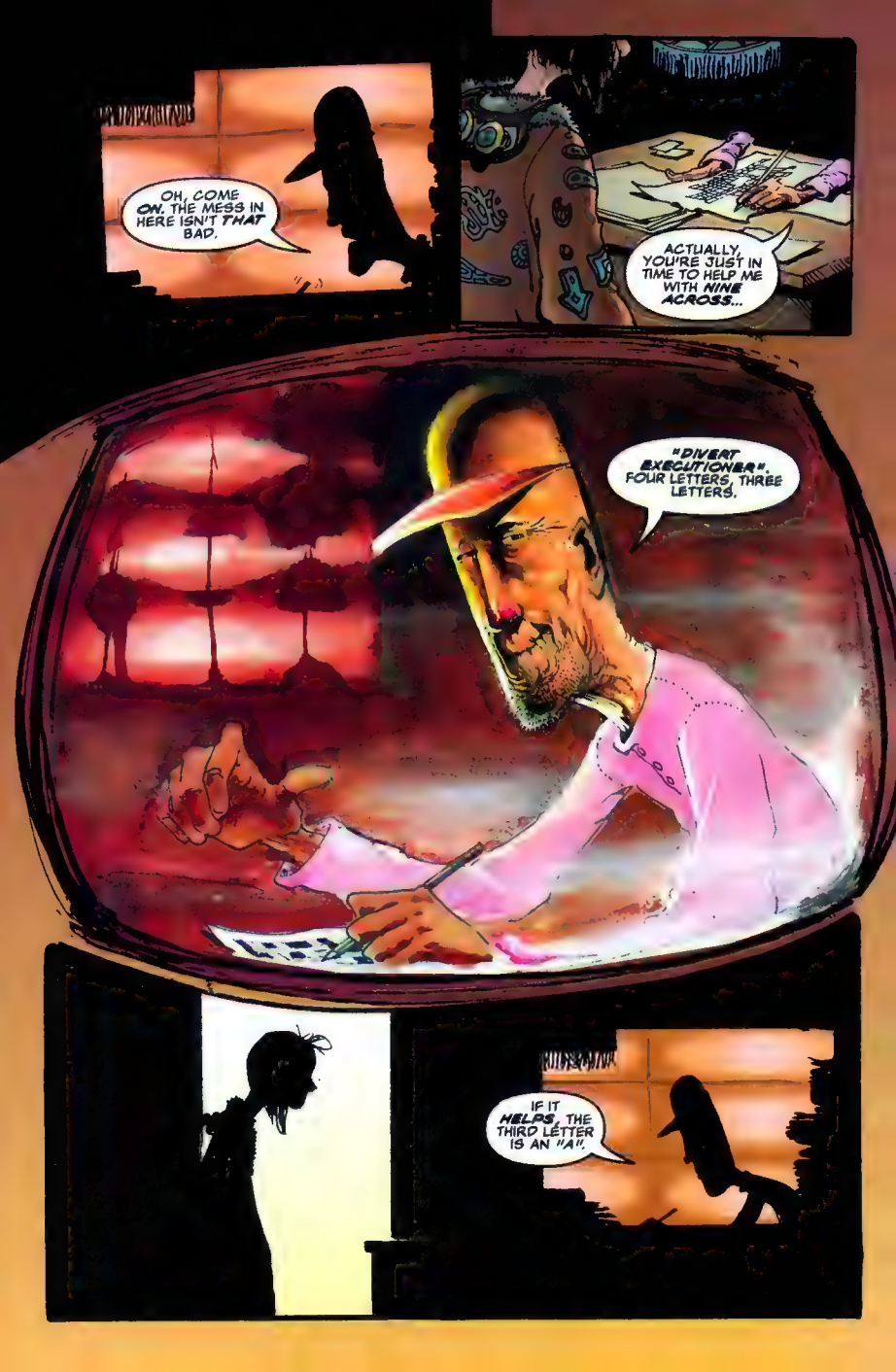

GOSH.
YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY SURE IT WAS THE PENDER GIRL?
WHAT, YOU WANT ME TO TAKE A SMEAR TEST OR SOMETHIN'? OF COURSE I'M #♦%@&♦ SURE!
WE FIGURED THESE NEW CHILD MAINTENANCE LAWS MIGHT UNEARTH HIM, AND WE WERE RIGHT.
TOP-NOTCH TRACKING, LARRY! IF IRWIN WERE HERE, HE'D GIVE YOU SUCH A HUG.
YEAH, I KNOW.
ANYWAY, I FIGURE ON JUST FOLLOWIN' HER WHILE SHE DOES ALL THE TRACKIN'. UNLESS ANYBODY'S GOT ANYTHIN' ELSE TO ADD.
THAT'S A VERY NICE DRAWING, LARRY. I CALL IT "WHEN DID YOU LAST SEE YOUR FATHER?"
WHAT THE #&%♦--
THANK YOU, GLYNN. THAT WAS A VERY SPECIAL MOMENT, BUT RIGHT NOW WE HAVE A MISSION, OLD BUDDY.
OH, RIGHT! LIKE HE REMEMBERS WHAT THAT IS! LOOK, LET'S JUST GO GET IN THE #%♦&#%@ CAR, OKAY?
LAST ONE OUT, SWITCH OFF THE WALLS.

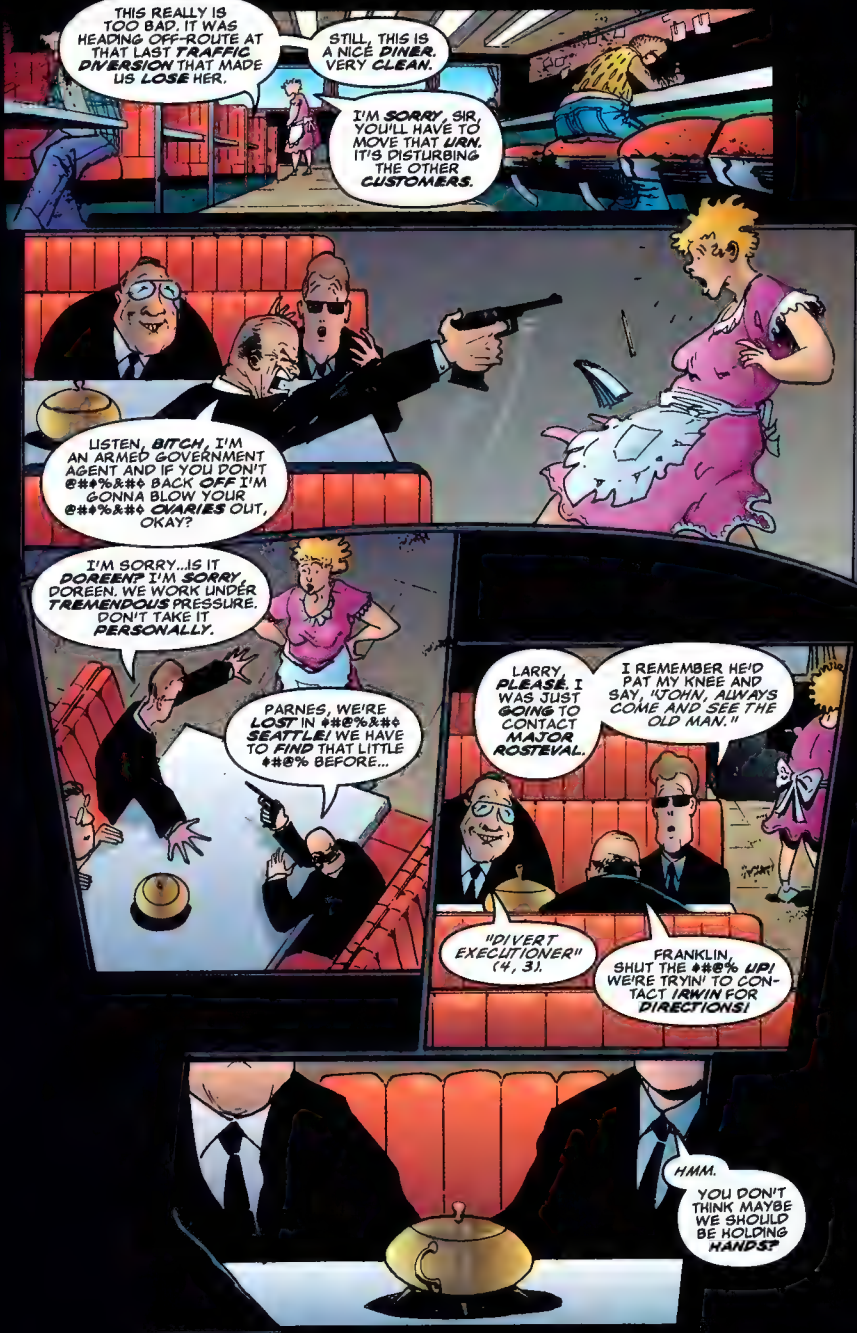
MEMORIAL
SO, ARE YOU DATING?
MOM, GET REAL. THE ONLY GUY WHO PAYS ME ANY ATTENTION IS THIS WINO I CALL NORBERT THE NAG.
MOM, HE'S A WINO. I DON'T MAKE EYE CONTACT. LISTEN, I HAVE TO FIND DAD...
IS HE HANDSOME?
YEAH, YOU SAID THIS WELFARE THING.
WELL, THE LAST ADDRESS I HEARD WAS THE LOOSE END TRAILER PARK IN SEATTLE.
IF YOU FIND HIM, ASK HIM IF HE STILL HAS MY COCKNEY REBEL TAPE.

SARA, WAIT! WE REALLY GOTTA TALK!
SARA, HEY...
HAY IS FOR HORSES, NORBERT. DROP DEAD.
...MY BOY DUANE, HE'S IN THE ARMY. ONE O'THEM HOMOSEXUAL REGIMENTS, AIN'T THAT CUTE?
HE SAYS WE OUGHTA BE READY T'GIVE THEM TACO-TOSSERS HELL!
I GOT A PICTURE HERE...

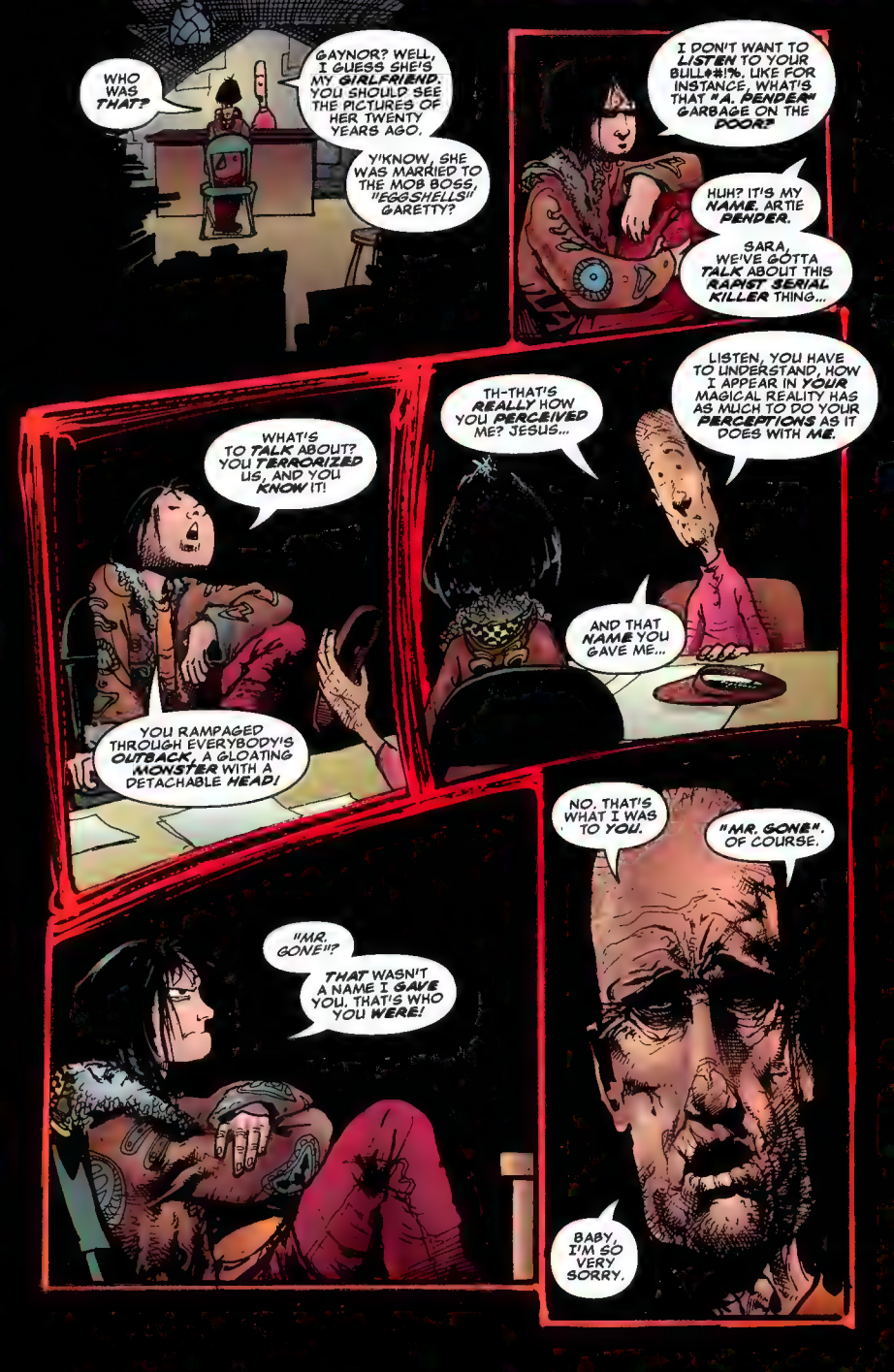
SEATTL
BUS DEPOT
LOOSE END
TRAILER PA

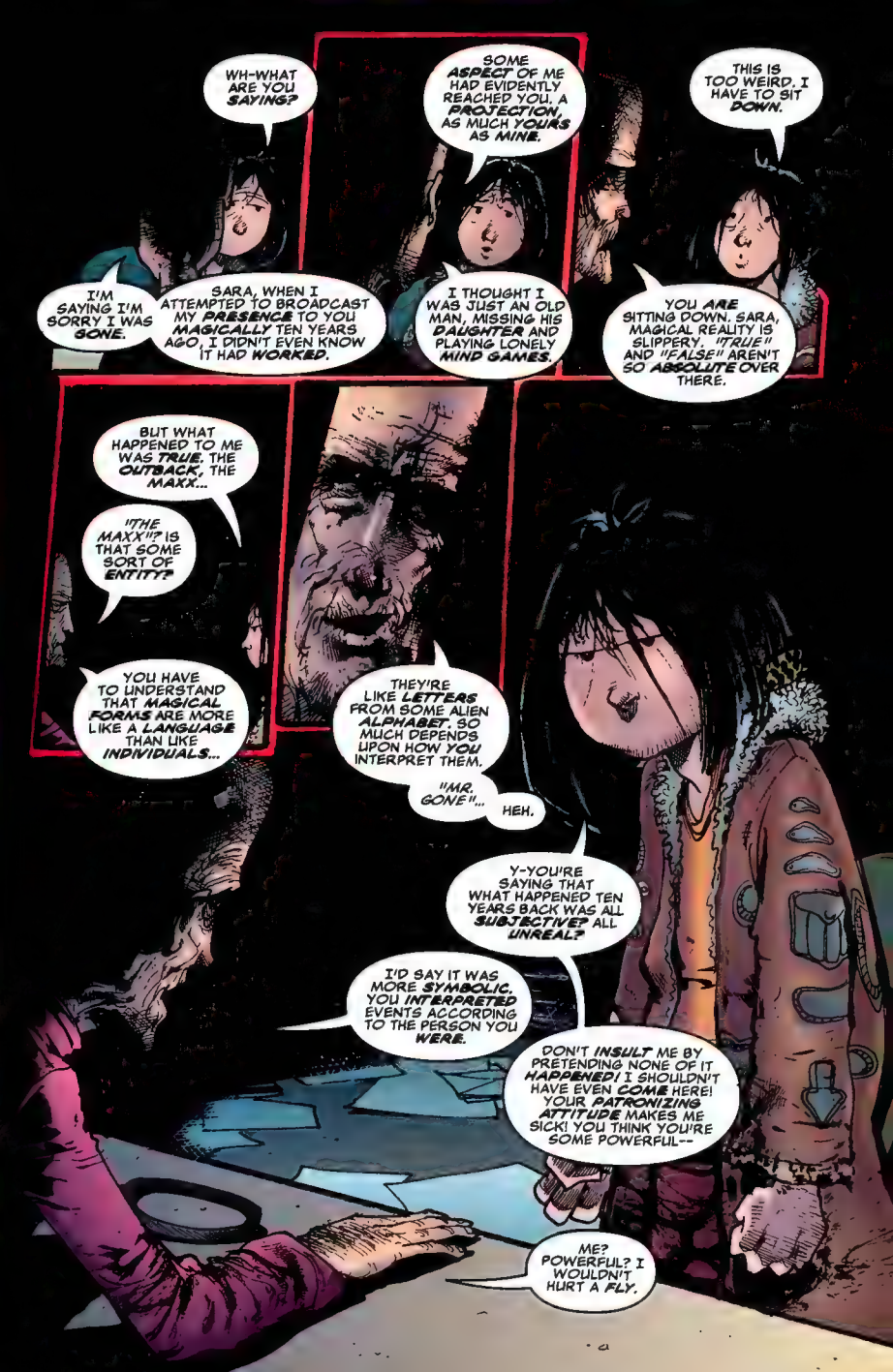

WHAT IS ALL THIS CRAP...?


OH, COME ON. THE MESS IN HERE ISN'T THAT BAD.
ACTUALLY, YOU'RE JUST IN TIME TO HELP ME WITH NINE ACROSS...
"DIVERT EXECUTIONER". FOUR LETTERS, THREE LETTERS.
IF IT HELPS, THE THIRD LETTER IS AN "A".

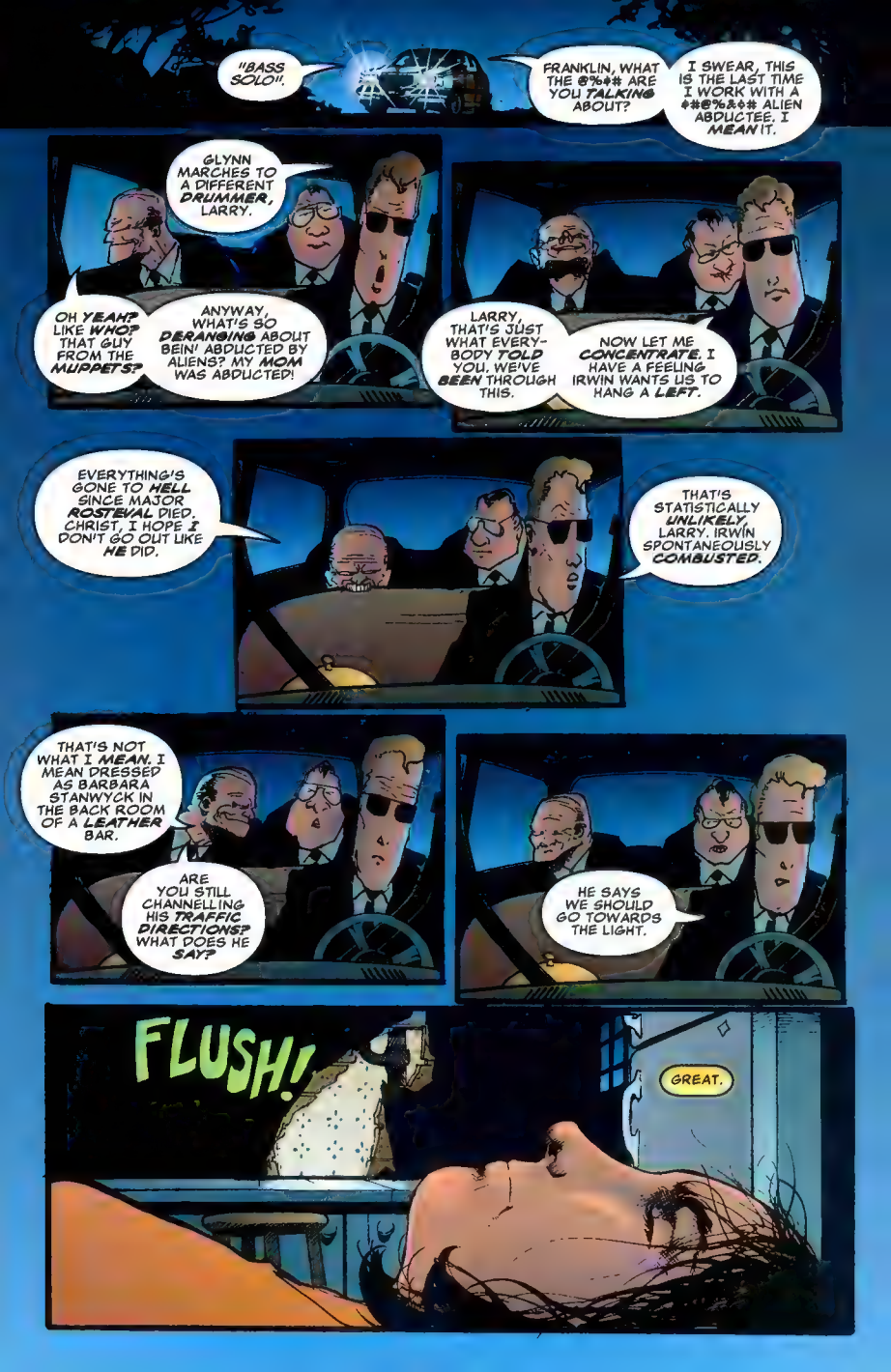

THIS REALLY IS TOO BAD. IT WAS HEADING OFF-ROUTE AT THAT LAST TRAFFIC DIVERSION THAT MADE US LOSE HER.
STILL, THIS IS A NICE DINER. VERY CLEAN.
I'M SORRY, SIR, YOU'LL HAVE TO MOVE THAT URN. IT'S DISTURBING THE OTHER CUSTOMERS.
LISTEN, BITCH, I'M AN ARMED GOVERNMENT AGENT AND IF YOU DON'T @##%&## BACK OFF I'M GONNA BLOW YOUR @##%&## OVARIES OUT, OKAY?
I'M SORRY...IS IT DOREEN? I'M SORRY, DOREEN. WE WORK UNDER TREMENDOUS PRESSURE. DON'T TAKE IT PERSONALLY.
PARNES, WE'RE LOST IN ##@%&## SEATTLE! WE HAVE TO FIND THAT LITTLE ##@% BEFORE...
LARRY, PLEASE. I WAS JUST GOING TO CONTACT MAJOR ROSTEVAL.
I REMEMBER HE'D PAT MY KNEE AND SAY, "JOHN, ALWAYS COME AND SEE THE OLD MAN."
"DIVERT EXECUTIONER" (4, 3).
FRANKLIN, SHUT THE ##@% UP! WE'RE TRYIN' TO CONTACT IRWIN FOR DIRECTIONS!
HMM.
YOU DON'T THINK MAYBE WE SHOULD BE HOLDING HANDS?

SO. THEY WANT ME TO PAY YOUR WELFARE.
FRANKLY, HONEY, I'M NOT SURE I CAN...
DON'T "HONEY" ME. I FEEL TAINTED JUST BEING HERE, AFTER WHAT YOU DID...
WHAT I DID?
YEAH, YOU! TEN YEARS BACK, REMEMBER? MR. GONE, THE MAGIC RAPIST SERIAL KILLER! HE GETS DECAPITATED BUT HE KEEPS COMING BACK!
YOU SON OF A BITCH. YOU...
HELL-OH-EE? I THOUGHT I HEARD VOICES IN HERE!
THIS MUST BE THAT DAUGHTER YOU'RE ALWAYS MOONING OVER.
UH, YEAH. SARA, THIS IS GAYNOR.
HI, SWEETHEART. DON'T LISTEN TO A THING HE TELLS YA ABOUT ME. ARTIE, I'M GOING TO THE STORE. YOU NEED ANYTHING?
UH, YEAH. YEAH, GET ME A PACK OF TWINKIES...ARE THOSE LOW TAR? AW, BETTER MAKE IT HO-HO'S.
SURE THING. SEE YA LATER.
MY DOCTOR SAYS HO-HO'S.

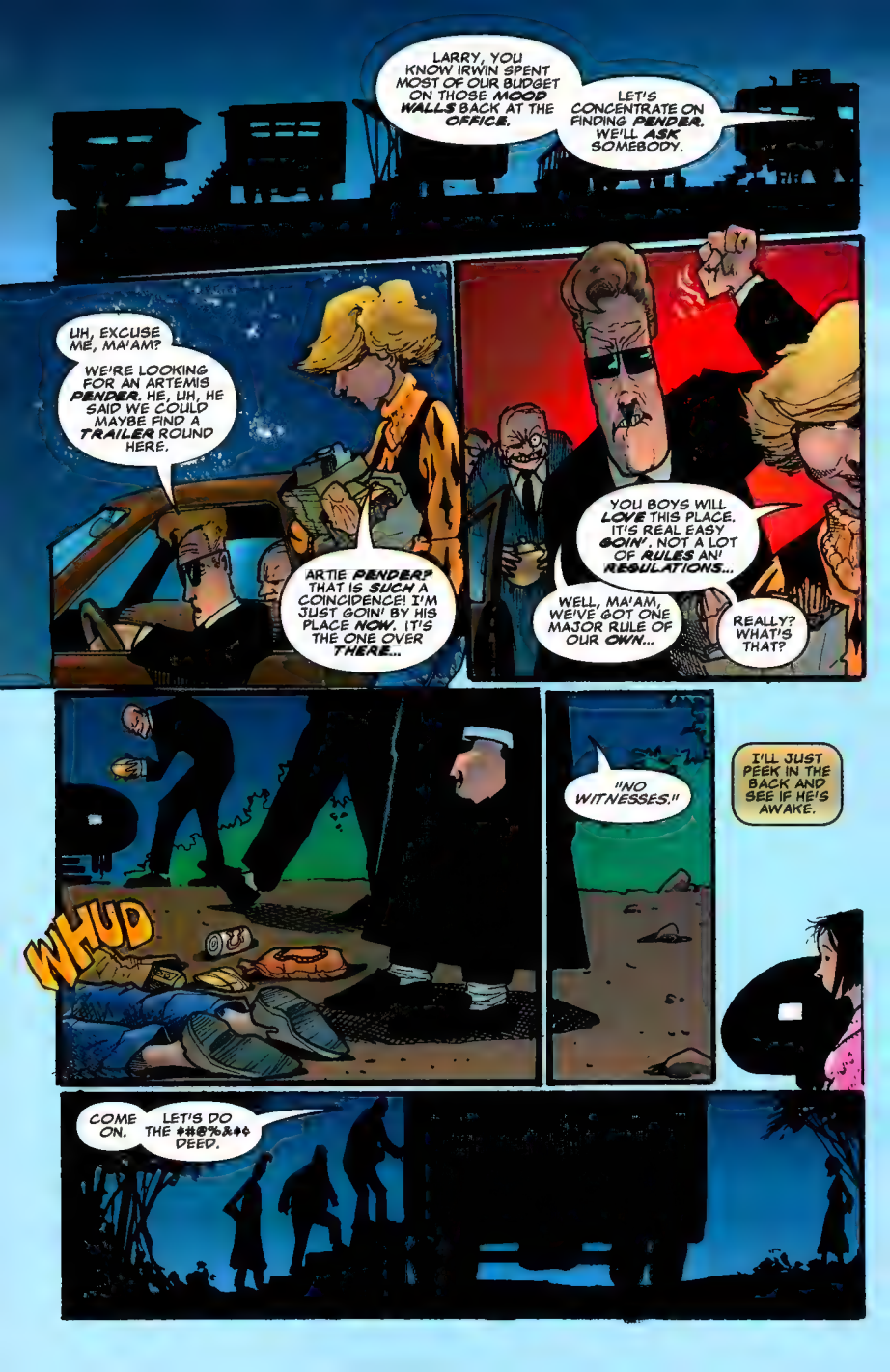

WHO WAS THAT?
GAYNOR? WELL, I GUESS SHE'S MY GIRLFRIEND. YOU SHOULD SEE THE PICTURES OF HER TWENTY YEARS AGO.
Y'KNOW, SHE WAS MARRIED TO THE MOB BOSS, "EGGSHELLS" GARETTY?
I DON'T WANT TO LISTEN TO YOUR BULL@#!%, LIKE FOR INSTANCE, WHAT'S THAT "A. PENDER" GARBAGE ON THE DOOR?
HUH? IT'S MY NAME. ARTIE PENDER.
SARA, WE'VE GOTTA TALK ABOUT THIS RAINST SERIAL KILLER THING...
LISTEN, YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND, HOW I APPEAR IN YOUR MAGICAL REALITY HAS AS MUCH TO DO YOUR PERCEPTIONS AS IT DOES WITH ME.
TH-THAT'S REALLY HOW YOU PERCEIVED ME? JESUS...
AND THAT NAME YOU GAVE ME...
WHAT'S TO TALK ABOUT? YOU TERRORIZED US, AND YOU KNOW IT!
YOU RAMPAGED THROUGH EVERYBODY'S OUTBACK, A GLOATING MONSTER WITH A DETACHABLE HEAD!
NO. THAT'S WHAT I WAS TO YOU.
"MR. GONE". OF COURSE.
"MR. GONE"?
THAT WASN'T A NAME I GAVE YOU. THAT'S WHO YOU WERE!
BABY, I'M SO VERY SORRY.

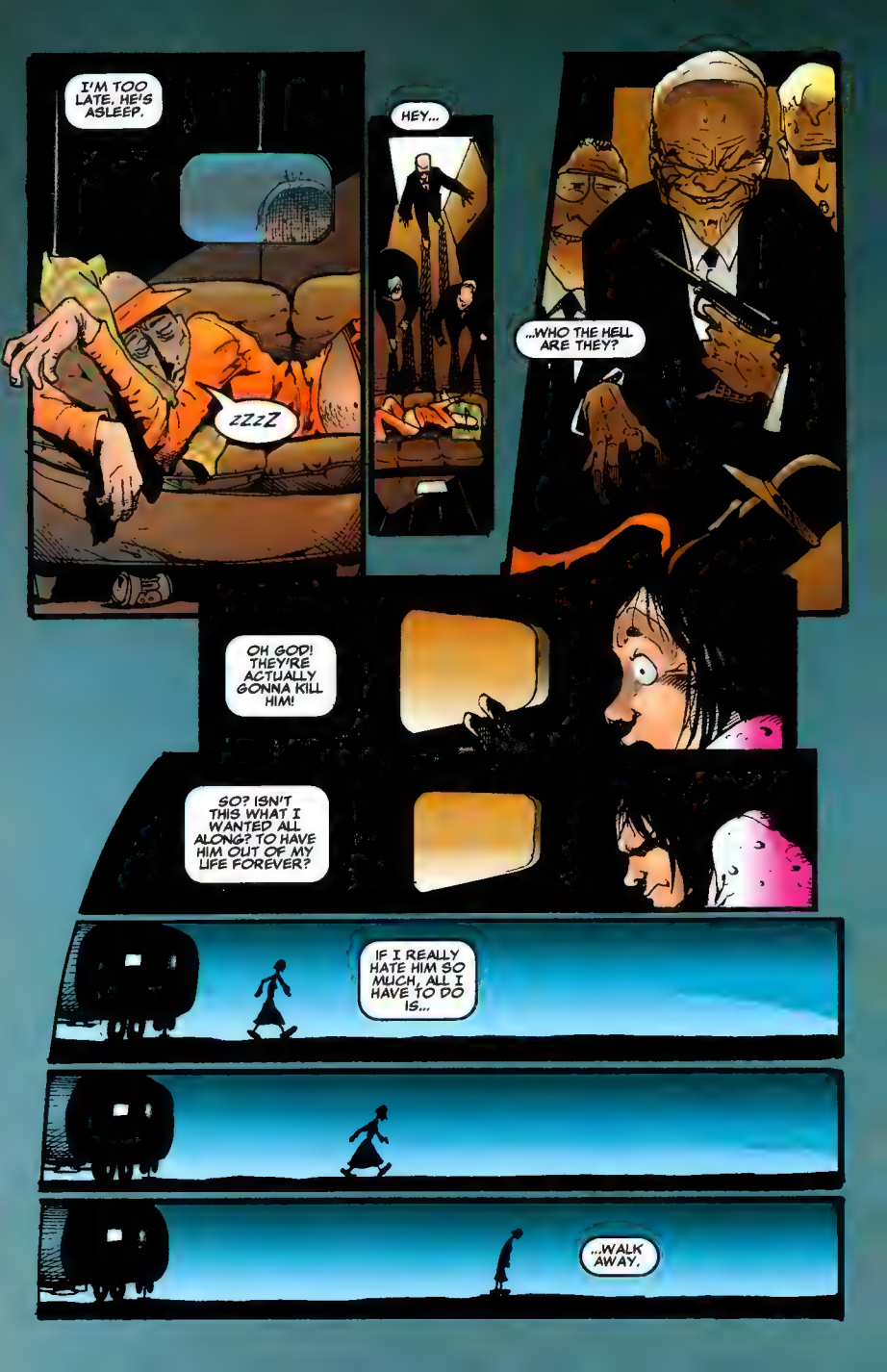

WH-WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
SOME ASPECT OF ME HAD EVIDENTLY REACHED YOU. A PROJECTION, AS MUCH YOURS AS MINE.
THIS IS TOO WEIRD. I HAVE TO SIT DOWN.
I'M SAYING I'M SORRY I WAS GONE.
SARA, WHEN I ATTEMPTED TO BROADCAST MY PRESENCE TO YOU MAGICALLY TEN YEARS AGO, I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW IT HAD WORKED.
I THOUGHT I WAS JUST AN OLD MAN, MISSING HIS DAUGHTER AND PLAYING LONELY MIND GAMES.
YOU ARE SITTING DOWN. SARA, MAGICAL REALITY IS SLIPPERY. "TRUE" AND "FALSE" AREN'T SO ABSOLUTE OVER THERE.
BUT WHAT HAPPENED TO ME WAS TRUE. THE OUTBACK, THE MAXX...
"THE MAXX"? IS THAT SOME SORT OF ENTITY?
YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THAT MAGICAL FORMS ARE MORE LIKE A LANGUAGE THAN LIKE INDIVIDUALS...
THEY'RE LIKE LETTERS FROM SOME ALIEN ALPHABET. SO MUCH DEPENDS UPON HOW YOU INTERPRET THEM.
"MR. GONE"... HEH.
Y-YOU'RE SAYING THAT WHAT HAPPENED TEN YEARS BACK WAS ALL SUBJECTIVE? ALL UNREAL?
I'D SAY IT WAS MORE SYMBOLIC. YOU INTERPRETED EVENTS ACCORDING TO THE PERSON YOU WERE.
DON'T INSULT ME BY PRETENDING NONE OF IT HAPPENED! I SHOULDN'T HAVE EVEN COME HERE! YOUR PATRONIZING ATTITUDE MAKES ME SICK! YOU THINK YOU'RE SOME POWERFUL--
ME? POWERFUL? I WOULDN'T HURT A FLY.

YEAH, RIGHT. NONE OF THE PAIN YOU CAUSED ME OR MOM ALL THOSE YEARS AGO SEEMS TO HAVE EVEN REGISTERED IN YOU.
I HATE YOU! I NEVER WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN! I HOPE YOU DIE A SLOW, LONG, PATHETIC DEATH!
I'D KILL YOU MYSELF IF I WASN'T SUCH A WIMP!
I DON'T WANT ANYTHING FROM YOU...
...LEAST OF ALL, YOUR MONEY.


"BASS SOLO".
FRANKLIN, WHAT THE @%&# ARE YOU *TALKING* ABOUT?
I SWEAR, THIS IS THE LAST TIME I WORK WITH A &#@%&&# ALIEN ABDUCTEE. I *MEAN* IT.
GLYNN MARCHES TO A DIFFERENT *DRUMMER*, LARRY.
OH *YEAH?* LIKE *WHO?* THAT GUY FROM THE *MUPPETS?*
ANYWAY, WHAT'S SO *DERANGING* ABOUT BEIN' ABDUCTED BY ALIENS? MY *MOM* WAS ABDUCTED!
LARRY, THAT'S JUST WHAT EVERY-BODY *TOLD* YOU. WE'VE *BEEN* THROUGH THIS.
NOW LET ME *CONCENTRATE*. I HAVE A FEELING IRWIN WANTS US TO HANG A *LEFT*.
EVERYTHING'S GONE TO *HELL* SINCE MAJOR *ROSTEVAL* DIED. CHRIST, I HOPE *I* DON'T GO OUT LIKE *HE* DID.
THAT'S STATISTICALLY *UNLIKELY*, LARRY. IRWIN SPONTANEOUSLY *COMBUSTED*.
THAT'S NOT WHAT I *MEAN*. I MEAN DRESSED AS BARBARA STANWYCK IN THE BACK ROOM OF A *LEATHER* BAR.
ARE YOU STILL CHANNELLING HIS *TRAFFIC DIRECTIONS?* WHAT DOES HE *SAY?*
HE SAYS WE SHOULD GO TOWARDS THE LIGHT.
FLUSH!
GREAT.

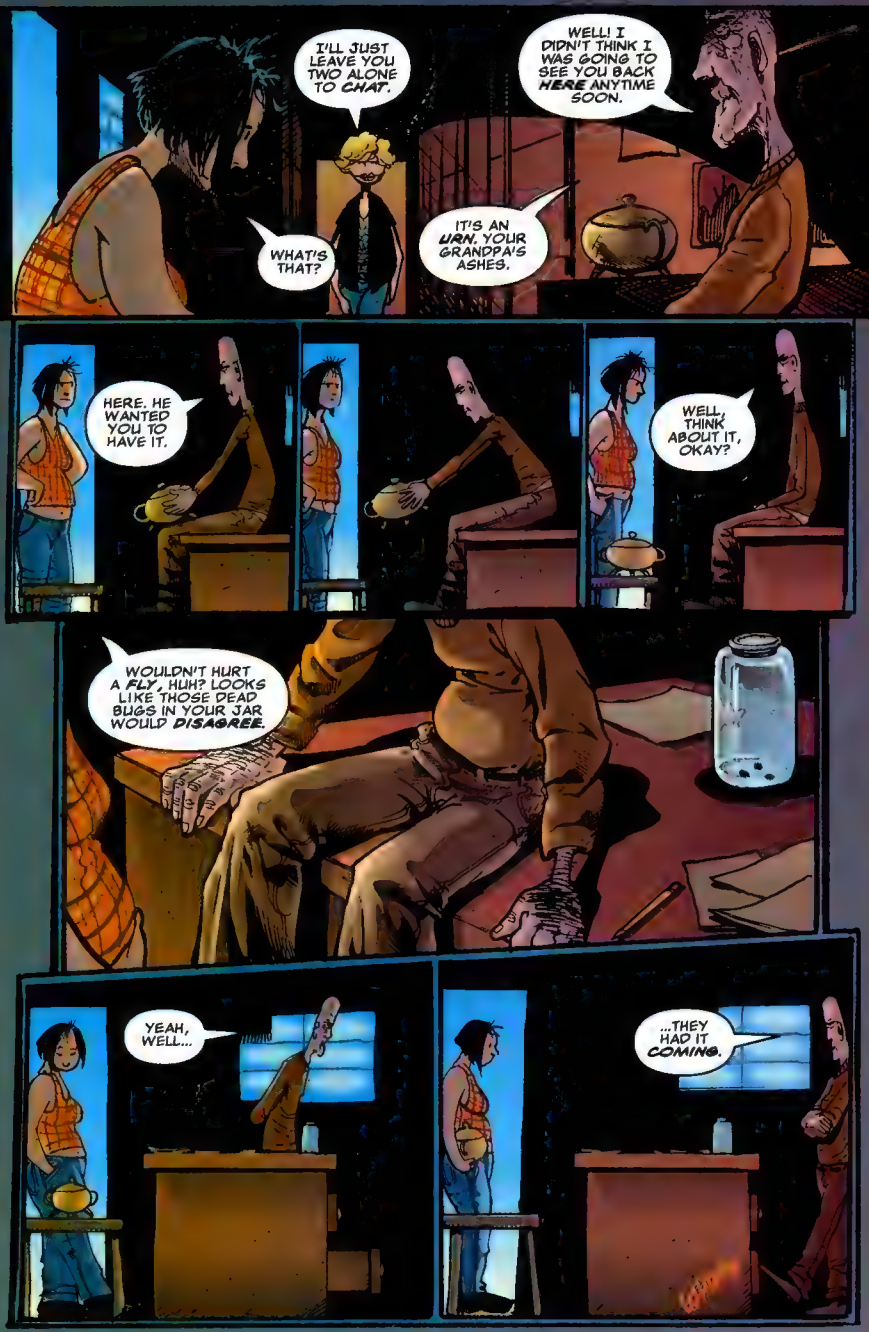
ONLY I WOULD FEEL GUILTY FOR YELLING AT A RAPIST.
THOUGH I HAVE THIS WEIRD FEELING...
...I SHOULD GO BACK AND SEE HIM.
LIKE SOMETHING'S UNFINISHED BETWEEN US.
I MEANT EVERYTHING I SAID, THOUGH.
REALLY.
LOOK AT THIS PIECE OF #*%& CAR! THE AGENCY IS @#*%&# LAUGHING AT US, MAKING US DRIVE THIS!


LARRY, YOU KNOW IRWIN SPENT MOST OF OUR BUDGET ON THOSE MOOD WALLS BACK AT THE OFFICE.
LET'S CONCENTRATE ON FINDING PENDER. WE'LL ASK SOMEBODY.
UH, EXCUSE ME, MA'AM?
WE'RE LOOKING FOR AN ARTEMIS PENDER. HE, UH, HE SAID WE COULD MAYBE FIND A TRAILER ROUND HERE.
ARTIE PENDER? THAT IS SUCH A COINCIDENCE! I'M JUST GOIN' BY HIS PLACE NOW. IT'S THE ONE OVER THERE...
YOU BOYS WILL LOVE THIS PLACE. IT'S REAL EASY GOIN'. NOT A LOT OF RULES AN' REGULATIONS...
WELL, MA'AM, WE'VE GOT ONE MAJOR RULE OF OUR OWN...
REALLY? WHAT'S THAT?
WHUD
"NO WITNESSES."
I'LL JUST PEEK IN THE BACK AND SEE IF HE'S AWAKE.
COME ON.
LET'S DO THE #%@%&#$ DEED.

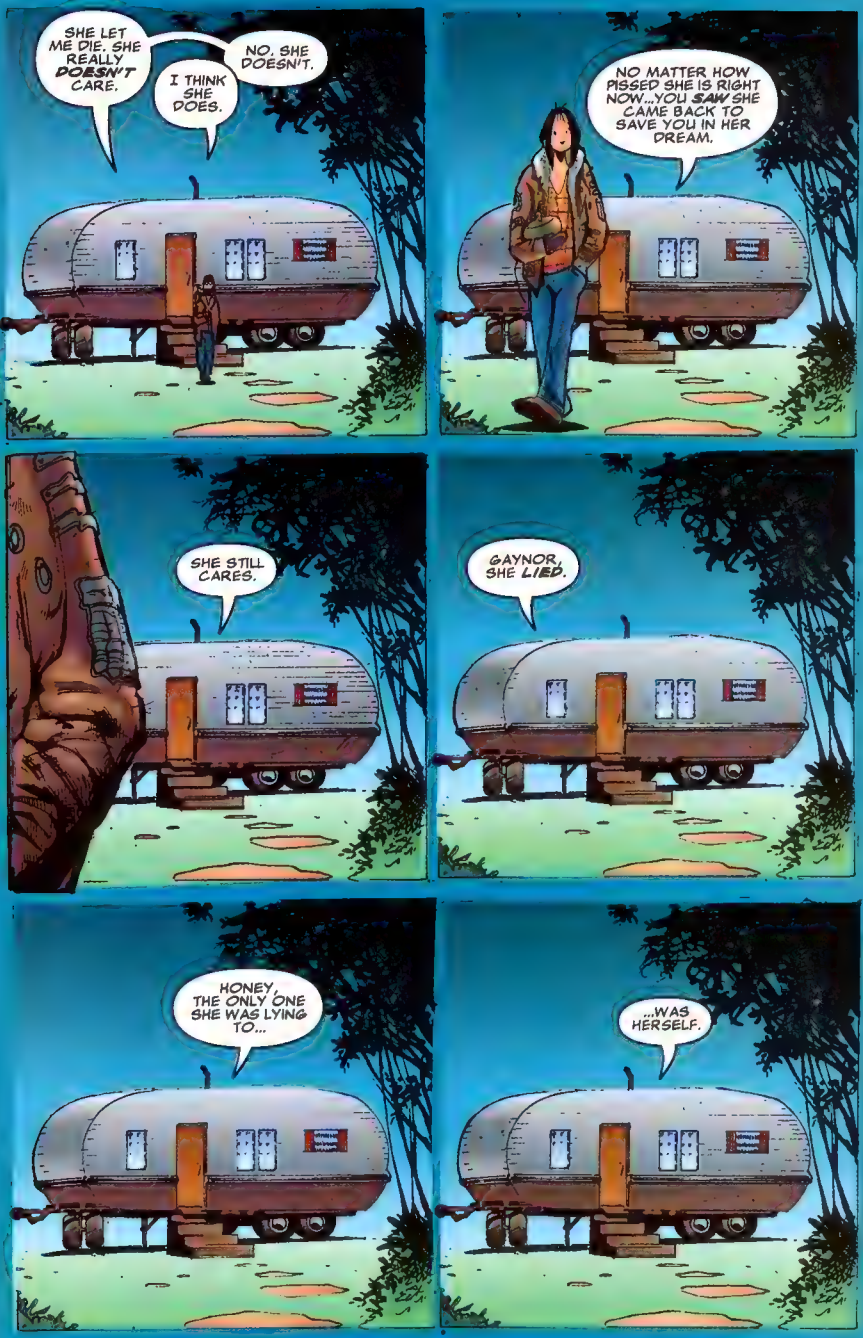

I'M TOO LATE. HE'S ASLEEP.
ZZZZ
HEY...
...WHO THE HELL ARE THEY?
OH GOD! THEY'RE ACTUALLY GONNA KILL HIM!
SO? ISN'T THIS WHAT I WANTED ALL ALONG? TO HAVE HIM OUT OF MY LIFE FOREVER?
IF I REALLY HATE HIM SO MUCH, ALL I HAVE TO DO IS...
...WALK AWAY.

WIMP
WIMP
WIMP
WIMP
OH GOD.
BLAM
I HATE MYSELF FOR NEEDING ANYONE, LEAST OF ALL A CREEP LIKE YOU.
OKAY, I LIED. I DO LOVE YOU, DADDY.
WIMP
WIMP
WIMP
I'M SORRY I WANTED YOU DEAD. PLEASE COME BACK.

DADDY...?
YOU'D THINK GOING OUT IN MY BATHROBE AND SLIPPERS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT WOULD TIP ME OFF THAT I WAS DREAMING.
MAN, WHAT A CREEPY DREAM. DROP DEAD, NORBERT.
BUT THERE'S STILL SOMETHING...
...I HAVE TO KNOW.
ARE YOU OKAY?
YEAH, I JUST NEED SOME ICE FOR MY FOREHEAD.
ARTIE, WHAT'D YOU DO WITH THEIR GUNS?
IN THE DESK DRAWER.
LISTEN, GAYNOR, LAST NIGHT I SAW INTO SARA'S DREAM. SHE DREAMED WHAT REALLY HAPPENED HERE.
SHE SAW WHAT YOU DID TO THEM?
NO. IN HER DREAM, THEY KILLED ME. SHE PAUSED--THEN TRIED TO SAVE ME--BUT WAS TOO LATE.
SO SHE WANTED YOU TO LIVE MORE THAN SHE WAS TEMPTED TO LET YOU DIE.


I'LL JUST LEAVE YOU TWO ALONE TO CHAT.
WELL! I DIDN'T THINK I WAS GOING TO SEE YOU BACK HERE ANYTIME SOON.
WHAT'S THAT?
IT'S AN URN, YOUR GRANDPA'S ASHES.
HERE. HE WANTED YOU TO HAVE IT.
WELL, THINK ABOUT IT, OKAY?
WOULDN'T HURT A FLY, HUH? LOOKS LIKE THOSE DEAD BUGS IN YOUR JAR WOULD DISAGREE.
YEAH, WELL...
...THEY HAD IT COMING.

SO, SARA, WHY ARE YOU HERE?
I DUNNO. I HAD THIS DREAM THAT I CAME TO SEE YOU LAST NIGHT, AND THESE THUGS BROKE IN, AND I SAW THEM KILL YOU.
AND YOU CAME TO SEE IF I WAS OKAY?
DON'T FLATTER YOURSELF. I GUESS I JUST CAME TO SAY GOODBYE.
SARA, IN THE DREAM...WHEN YOU SAW THEM ABOUT TO KILL ME, DID YOU TRY AND STOP THEM?
NO.

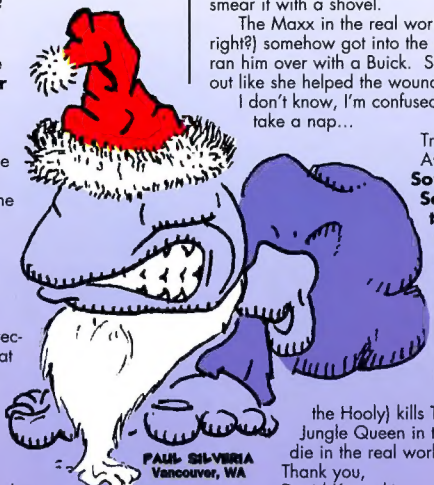

SHE LET ME DIE. SHE REALLY DOESN'T CARE.
I THINK SHE DOES.
NO. SHE DOESN'T.
NO MATTER HOW PISSED SHE IS RIGHT NOW...YOU SAW SHE CAME BACK TO SAVE YOU IN HER DREAM.
SHE STILL CARES.
GAYNOR, SHE LIED.
HONEY, THE ONLY ONE SHE WAS LYING TO...
...WAS HERSELF.

Dear Sam,
I'm in love with Maxx and I want to have his children. Can he procreate?
Rita
Newark, DE

Do you mean Maxx the horse, Dave the bum, or Julie's rabbit?

Dear Mr. Kieth,
You and Dave Feiss make one hell of a team. I have loved the Crappon part in The Maxx, and it's one of my favorite issues (I missed seeing the poop in animation, though). I've just recently seen Dave Feiss's creation, "Cow and Chicken," and I noticed your name as art director in the opening credits (that was you, wasn't it?). I must ask if you and Dave plan on doing any more projects together. Well, just stopped by to say the toon was cool, and mondo weird...I loved it! What else has Dave done animation for?
Sincerely,
Robbie Allen
Ardmore, OK

My cousin Dave has been in animation longer than I've been in comics. He's worked for Hanna Barbera and as a freelancer. Actually, Dean Taylor is the Art Director of "Cow and Chicken," and I share writing credits with Dave and his wife, Pilar—although the original concept and art are theirs. 13 episodes of Cow & Chicken have been picked up by the Cartoon Network, so hopefully we'll be writing many cool ideas.



Dear Sam and the rest of the crew,
Okay, Maxx is a rabbit in Julie's Outback, and he's a horse in Sarah's. The Outbacks are manifestations of the subconscious mind (right?). The Maxx is a manifestation of a hurt committed on that subconscious that's trying to work its way into the conscious mind so it can be dealt with, i.e. Julie coming to grips with the fact that she couldn't help the wounded bunny, and then seeing her mother smear it with a shovel.
The Maxx in the real world (a.k.a. Dave, right?) somehow got into the whole mess after Julie ran him over with a Buick. She tried to help him out like she helped the wounded bunny.
I don't know, I'm confused. Maybe I should go take a nap...
Trying to understand,
Andrew C. Hunt

Sounds good to me. So now the question is: If Julie was a Queen in her Outback, what is Sara in hers—in her adult Outback, that is, not the quilt tent of her childhood.

Dear Mr. Kieth,
If Mr. Gone (inside the Hooly) kills The Maxx and the Jungle Queen in the Outback, will they die in the real world?
Thank you,
David Kempski
Belleville, NJ

I think it's more like a world inside of them would die.

Dear Sam,
What's with all the BUTTS? In #18, when that guy (who would later become Maxx) got hit with a car, he had pants on, but when Julie checked to see if he was alive, you could see his butt! What, did the crash knock his pants off?
Jeremy Dunlap
Standish, ME
P.S. Is it just me, or has the Hooly been chasing Maxx and the Leopard Queen for a heck of a long time?
P.P.S. If you don't print this, I'll get ALL my friends to stop reading Maxx. And believe me, they'll both do it.

Well, there goes our readership. What's with all the butt LETTERS? We get at least one a month! Hey, I just draw 'em—you guys actually count them!

Mad-Maxx-Maniacs,
Is the portal between

the real world and the Outback in the volcano and Julie's toilet? If so, could Julie's puke have caused all the lava in the Outback?

Just wondering,
Dustin T. Hutt
Loveland, CO

Close—real close. The Greeks thought a story climax should provide a *catharsis*, which actually means "vomiting up" or "purging." Greek drama was constructed with the intent of triggering a "vomiting up" of emotions by the audience, getting rid of the poisons of everyday life. Nowadays, shrinks believe a catharsis is a way of relieving tension—bringing unconscious stuff up so you can deal with it. Good call, Dustin. It's no accident that Julie was driving the porcelain bus into clarity.

Mr. Kieth,

Congratulations on creating such a seemingly complex and multi-leveled story.

In one episode, we hear Gone's voice saying that when the Isz are brought over from Pangaea/Outback they become nasty little critters (though they seemed kind of nasty in the Outback, too). They can be disguised as other things, old ladies, Beavis-sounding nihil-punks, cops, etc. Here is the jump: The Outback seems to represent the realm of pure possibility, Heisenberg's "potentia," or even better, Casteneda's "Nagual," and there the Isz are white and not as ferocious looking as they are on the other side.

English-Prime is English with the word "is" and its conjugations removed in an attempt to bring communication, language-models, and writing up to speed with quantum physics. The word "is" creates finalisms which conflict with observation and actually alter observation thereafter so that subsequent phenomena tend to appear the same as the first encounter. Are the Isz direct manifestations of this concept? Are the finalisms that Julie and Maxx hold the Isz Mr. Gone uses to attack them with?

Sincerely,
Michael Nau
Framingham, MA

Sure. What you said.

SAM! AAAAAARGHH!!!!

First of all, thanks a mill' for printing my drawing on the back cover of Maxx #20. VERY uplifting.

Now, my name is NOT Mike Lightfoot. Not that it's a bad name, but it's not mine! JAIME MARGARY TORRES. AAHH, that's it—TMJ! It's my initials—backward-written on Julie's pants. TMJ!

The blue strokes between Maxx's leg and arm are not part of the drawing. They must be paper folds, 'cause I didn't do them. The meaning of the drawing is that since I read that The Maxx would go back to being Dave, I drew him giving one of his feathers from the outback to Julie. He's giving it up to her.

Third, the drawing is done on cheap paper with cheap markers. It even has "paper hairs" coming out through his leg. And fourth, if my brain doesn't fail me, I wrote my name with a pencil on the back.

Thanks,
TMJ
Bayamon, P.R.

Your frustration with our mistake is well-justified, and my helpers have been duly slapped silly. But don't dis your work, guy—its spirit holds up, whatever you may think of the rendition. (Cool feather symbol idea, too.) Some of the best art we get is doodles on envelopes, where people feel less self-conscious.

Dear Mr. Kieth,

The Maxx is, without a doubt, one of the most original, thought-provoking and enjoyable works of contemporary art, even though it is basically a rip-off of Democritus.

Seriously though, are you familiar with Desmond Morris? I was reading Manwatching, in which he explores the origins and geography of human behaviour, when I came across a chapter dealing with human behavior patterns surrounding the keeping of pets. He writes:

> If we look at the way animal loves change with the age of the child, a curious feature emerges. The smallest animals are more favored by older children, the largest animals by younger children. In other words, very small children are looking for big symbolic animals—presumably parent- substitutes—and the older children are seeking small symbolic animals—presumably child- substitutes.

This made me think of the spirit animals you've endowed Julie and Sarah with, and their symbolic natures. Morris continues:

> The horse provides an interesting exception to the general rule about older children liking smaller animals. This shows a peak of appeal

just before the age of puberty. If the figures for girls and boys are separated, the curves for 'horse-love' reveal something else, namely that this animal is three times as popular with girls as with boys...No doubt the open-legged posture of the rider and the rhythmic movements of the horse's body have a sexual undertone and this, combined with its size, strength and power, gives it a massive but unconscious appeal for girls reaching puberty.

At first I didn't think that Sarah's spirit animal being a horse had anything to do with her sexuality. But there are definitely sexual elements in the development of some of your characters. Julie being assaulted, what Jimmy did to Sarah, Sarah's father being a serial rapist...Julie seemed to be in control of her sexuality, but the 'Jill' episodes suggest that it was in control of her. Sarah thinks that Julie is physically attractive, whereas she is...Sarah. I am looking forward to the next twenty issues of The Maxx. It will be interesting to see whether or not she comes to terms with her father, and how she ultimately perceives herself.

Sincerely
Brian R. Dixon
Upper Marlboro, MD

If there ever was a Maxx movie...

Sam,

Some time back you asked for a cast for a Maxx movie. After thinking about it and renting some tapes, this is what I came up with:

Maxx: voice-over from cartoon
Julie: Michelle Pfeiffer
Sara(h): Jennifer Lien
Mr. Gone: Jack Nicholson
Sara(h)'s Mom: Cher or Sigourney Weaver

Sincerely,
Russell Dickson
Maysville, KY

Howdy,

Casting call for The Maxx feature film:

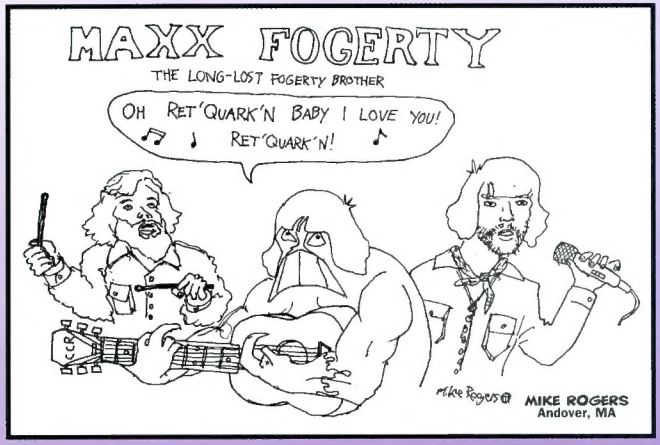
Julie: Patricia Arquette
Sarah: Sarah Gilbert
Artemis P. Gone: Christopher Walken
Ret Quarken: Marlon Brando
Glorie: Juliette Lewis
Sgt. Ocono: Lawrence Tierney
and starring
HARVEY KEITEL as THE MAXX
[He's got the butt for it!]

Daniel Wright
Ridgewood, NY

Dear Sam,

Thanxx for running my ad in issue #19. Maxx-heads are sure friendly! I received my cards before I even bought the issue my ad ran in! Please print my letter so my fellow Maxx-heads will stop sending me trading cards. I write every one of them back and my hand is starting to hurt.

Sincerely yours,
Al Appalucci
Atco, NJ



The Maxx rules,

The Maxx was completely and totally amazing. The best thing I've ever seen on MTV and I'm not lying.

As for me, the most amazing quote I ever heard on The Maxx (way more profound than that thing about women being teases) (and I am also paraphrasing) was this:

"They say that sometimes no means yes. And the weird thing is that sometimes it does. But I don't think that any guy who ever got up off a crying woman was confused about the difference."

Can any boys possibly comprehend what that means?? That's why The Maxx is so important to those of us who have survived attacks/abuse of any kind.

Madfoot
AOL

More from the guy in Holland:

Dear Sam,

So it's finally over, isn't it? Twenty issues of The Maxx have come and gone...Of course, I am fully aware that the ending of Julie's story doesn't mean the book's demise or the final appearance of The Maxx. It's just that, with issue #20, a major story arc has come to a close, leaving me reeling with the impact of the drama this tale has carried from the beginning. A sense of nostalgia, a sense of anger about the fact that, while the story might have a happy ending, it surely doesn't feel like one, as Julie so eloquently said herself on those final pages of the ish.

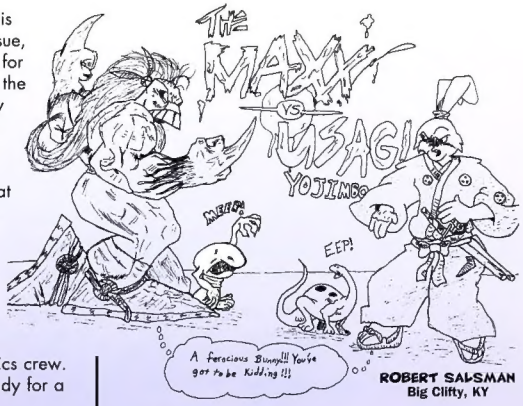
Still, I must compliment you and every single creative talent that has helped put these 20 issues

on the racks and on the right track. This twentieth issue truly was a landmark issue, with especially the colors standing out for me, personally speaking. Throughout the scenes which counted most in this very issue, the almost over-abundant use of the color red created an almost tangible atmosphere as well as a bitter irony. Red in itself, actually, is irony at its best, seeing how this color both is the color of love and the color of hatred. This oxymoron was used to its fullest potential here, as it was perfectly suited to giving form and substance to the dramatic tension between The Maxx and Julie. My hat's off to Steve Oliff and the Olyoptics crew.

The door has closed. Let's get ready for a fresh new start, shall we?

Olav Beemer
The Netherlands

Yep, I'm ready for a new start. But first, just a few more strokes to send me on my way...



ROBERT SALSMAN
Big Clifty, KY

Hi Mr. Sam Kieth,

I used to describe your comic as a book with full page illustrations that had forced intervals between chapters. I now say that it's a very good book that lets you re-read the last episode over and over until you're ready for the next mind-bending turn. It's not just a comic anymore, and it was one for a very short time, after you guys pulled the story out of the crossover/superhero ditch. But you have soared so far with this. This is not a comic. It is not a book. It is simply *The Maxx*. Its format will make it much overlooked by some of those who could appreciate it, and attract a few unsavory characters that love being "Maxx-heads" because, ya know, MTV's Oddities is just sooo cool. Now, I mean to offend no Maxx-heads out there, preaching Pez to the unworthy, because they are a wondrous bunch of goobs whose culture has never been duplicated by any other product or idea. And they provide an amazing forum at the back purple zone of the comic. All the diverse takes on The Maxx are explored.

Then there's you, thine creators. After you get the lucrative MTV deal and the profits come speeding even faster than usual, after all of that, you go and give your readers a FREE CLASSIFIED SECTION!!! And full color back cover reader art! You guys really care about us readers! I don't know if you're for the alterna-dupes that clog up Maxx-dom but support it with their rampant spending, but you guys sure do love us. You're funny and poignant.

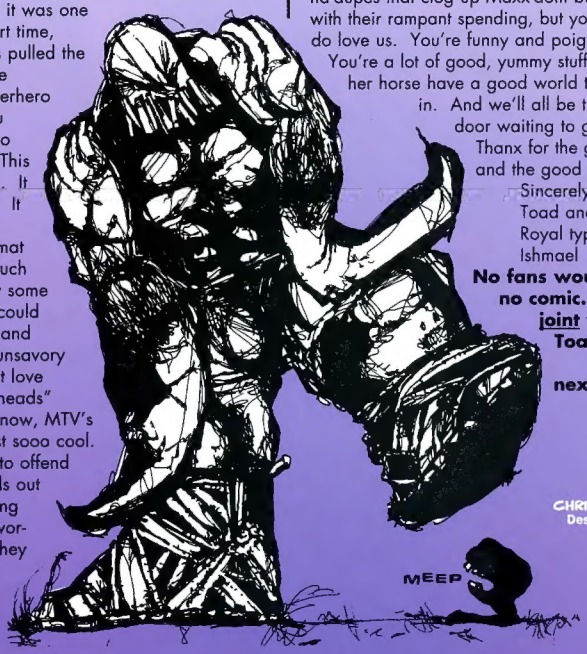
You're a lot of good, yummy stuff. Sara and her horse have a good world to go mad in. And we'll all be there at the door waiting to greet them.

Thanx for the good comic and the good years.

Sincerely,
Toad and his 1935 Royal typewriter,
Ishmael

No fans would mean no comic. This is a joint wild ride, Toad.

See you next month!



CHRIS ROBERTS
Des Moines, IA